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Borough of Ludlow



ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the Year

1951

Public Health Officers

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH :

JAMES L. GREGORY,

M.B., CH.B., F.R.F.P.S., D.P.H., D.T.M. AND HY.

SANITARY INSPECTOR :

H. V. JAMES,

M.I.MUN.E., CERT. ROYAL SAN. INST.

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BOROUGH OF LUDLOW

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, 1951

LUDLOW,

12th July, 1952.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the report on the health of the Borough for the year ending 31st December, 1951. It has been drawn up in accordance with the Ministry of Health's Circular 42/51, dated 10th December, 1951.

The estimated population is 6,427, and the Birth Rate was 17.6 and the Death Rate 12.3 per 1,000 of the population. The statistics for the year are generally satisfactory.

There was no serious epidemic of infectious disease and no cases of Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, or Acute Poliomyelitis were notified. Measles was prevalent among the children, but there were no deaths from this disease.

Twenty-one two bed-roomed houses were completed by the Council during the year and four houses were built by private owners. Particulars of the Council's future housing programme will be found in Section D of the report.

Mention was made last year of the serious problem presented by the deterioration of many of the older houses in the town which are gradually becoming more unfit each year. It is clear that landlords cannot afford at present prices of labour and materials to render many of these houses fit. The giving of "improvement grants" under the Housing Act, 1949, does not appear to have helped matters in this respect as few owners have applied for such grants.

JAMES L. GREGORY,
Medical Officer of Health.

BOROUGH OF LUDLOW

Statistics, 1951

LIVE BIRTHS—

			Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	...	...	98	56	42
Illegitimate	...	...	7	4	3
Totals ...			105	60	45

Birth Rate per 1,000 of population - 17.6

STILL BIRTHS—

			Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	...	...	2	1	1
Illegitimate	...	...	—	—	—
Totals ...			2	1	1

Still Birth Rate - 18.7

DEATHS—

	Total	M.	F.
	99	54	45

Death Rate per 1,000 of population - 12.3

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES—

		No. of Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total Births
(a) From Puerperal Sepsis	...	Nil	—
(b) From other Puerperal causes	...	Nil	—
Totals ...		Nil	—

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR—

		No. of Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total Births
(a) Legitimate children per 1,000 live legitimate births	...	6	61
(b) Illegitimate children per 1,000 live illegitimate births	...	—	—
(c) All children per 1,000 total live births		6	57

Number of Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	8
„ „ „ „ Measles (all ages)	...	...	—
„ „ „ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	—
„ „ „ „ Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	...	...	—
„ „ „ „ Tuberculosis—Pulmonary	...	...	2
	Non-pulmonary	...	—

SECTION A

Statistics and Social Conditions

Area (in acres) ...	...	...	1,068
Estimated Population (mid-1951) ...	...	...	6,427
Number of Children aged 0-4 years	...	...	524
Number of Children aged 5-14 years	...	...	911
Number of Inhabited Houses	...	...	1,767
Rateable Value of District	...	...	£37,484
Product of 1d. Rate	...	...	£145

The Registrar-General's estimate of the population as at mid-1951 is given as 6,427. This is 17 more than in the previous year. The Census figure of last year was 6,455, and of these 3,018 were males and 3,437 females.

The natural increase of population, i.e., the excess of births over deaths, was 6.

The population in 1931 was 5,823 according to the Census of that year, so that there has been an increase of 632 in the population in the last twenty years.

BIRTHS

There were 105 live births (male 60, female 45) of which number 7 were illegitimate. The "corrected" birth rate of 17.6 is higher than the rate for England and Wales, which was 15.5.

STILL BIRTHS

Two still births were registered, which is the same number as last year. Both were legitimate births. The still birth rate is 18.7 per 1,000 total births.

DEATHS

A total of 99 deaths was registered, which is 18 more than last year. The corrected death rate was 12.3 per 1,000 of the population. (England and Wales 12.5.)

A table of the causes of death will be found at the end of the report. It will be seen that the deaths from Cancer fell from 16 in 1950 to 8. Diseases of the heart and circulation accounted for 36 deaths and Cerebral Haemorrhage and Thrombosis for 14. Influenza was given as the cause of death in 19 cases and this gives a death rate from this disease of 2.92 per 1,000. The death rate from Influenza for England and Wales was 0.38. The rate for Ludlow was therefore nearly eight times more than it was for the country as a whole. Influenza is not a notifiable disease and it is therefore not possible to state how many cases there were during the year. The only two deaths from notifiable diseases were from Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

MATERNAL MORTALITY

No death was reported from causes associated with child birth. The rate for the country was 0.78 per 1,000 total births. This is the fifth year in which no puerperal death has been reported in Ludlow Borough.

INFANTILE MORTALITY

The number of deaths of infants under one year of age was 6 and this gives an Infantile Mortality Rate of 57 per 1,000 live births. This rate is higher than that for England and Wales, which was 29.6. The following are the figures for Infant Deaths and Still Births in the Borough for the last six years :

Year		Still Births		Infant Deaths		Total
1946	...	8	...	7	...	15
1947	...	5	...	5	...	10
1948	...	2	...	2	...	4
1949	...	1	...	3	...	4
1950	...	2	...	3	...	5
1951	...	2	...	6	...	8

The figures for 1951 are not so good as for the previous three years. Of the six deaths three were due to congenital malformations, two to Pneumonia and one to Prematurity. The ages at death were : 1 hour, 1 day, 2 days, 2 months, 6 months, and 10 months.

The fall in the rate of infant mortality has been one of the most remarkable features of health statistics in this country during the last 50 years. At the beginning of the century infant mortality rates of 150, or even 200, were common and now the figure for the country is under 30. It will be evident that these figures show a great saving of infant lives.

The statistics for the year are satisfactory and show no special difference from those of other towns of similar size.

The population, as shown by the census figures for 1931 and 1951, has not increased to any great extent, the actual increase being 632 in the twenty years' period. The coming of new industries to the town would no doubt result in an increase of population and especially of those in the younger age groups.

SECTION B

General Provision of Health Services

STAFF

There have been no changes in the Staff. The officers are a Medical Officer of Health (part time) and a Sanitary Inspector who also holds the post of Borough Surveyor.

The names and qualifications of the officers are given at the beginning of the report.

LABORATORY FACILITIES

These facilities are provided by the Laboratory at Shrewsbury, where all bacteriological examinations of milk, water, ice cream, and other foods are carried out. Chemical analysis of water samples and of sewage effluents are undertaken at the Laboratory at Chester. Close co-operation is maintained with the laboratories and much help is received from them.

NURSING SERVICES IN THE HOME

These services are carried out by the County Council, who are responsible for them under the National Health Service Act, 1946.

Particulars of the services will be found in the Annual Report of the County Medical Officer of Health.

HOME HELP SERVICE

This service is maintained by the County Council and there is an office at 24, Corve Street, Ludlow (Tel. No. 382), where any applications for Home Helps can be received. The W.V.S. have now given up their work for this service in the county.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

Facilities for having children immunised against Diphtheria are available at Schools and Infant Welfare Centres and at School Clinics. Application should be made to the County Health Officer, College Hill, Shrewsbury. If parents wish their children immunised by their own private doctor this also can be arranged for and in no case is there any charge for the service.

The number of young children being immunised has fallen in the last year or two and the Ministry of Health are anxious that 75% of all young children should be immunised at or about their first birthday.

CLINICS

The County Council have a School Clinic, Welfare Centre, and Ante-natal Centre at Dinham, Ludlow. Orthopaedic cases can also be examined there.

The Venereal Diseases Clinic is at Shrewsbury and also the Chest Clinic. These are controlled by the Hospital Board.

HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION

The following list gives the names of the Hospitals serving the people of the town :

<i>Hospital</i>	<i>Address</i>
Royal Salop Infirmary	Shrewsbury
Cross Houses Hospital	Cross Houses
Cottage Hospital	Ludlow
East Hamlet Hospital	Ludlow
Shirlett Sanatorium	Broseley
Prees Heath Sanatorium	Whitchurch
Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital	Shrewsbury
Shelton Hospital	Bicton, near Shrewsbury
Monkmoor Hospital	Shrewsbury

The Children's Ward at the Royal Salop Infirmary has now been transferred to Monkmoor Hospital, where accommodation was available owing to the great decrease in the number of cases of Infectious Disease requiring hospital treatment.

No case of delay in getting patients to hospital was reported during the year. If accommodation is required for any patient the Doctor should telephone or write to the Bed Bureau, Royal Salop Infirmary (Tel. No. Shrewsbury 2056). This saves time as the Bureau know where beds are available and the Doctor does not have to telephone to different hospitals.

Infectious Diseases are admitted to Monkmoor Hospital, Shrewsbury, and in these cases the Medical Officer of Health should be informed as soon as possible.

Patients suffering from Tuberculosis are admitted to one or other of the Sanatoria by the Chest Physicians at the Clinic in Shrewsbury (Tel. No. Shrewsbury 3068).

SECTION C

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

This section of the report deals with Water Supplies, Drainage, Sewerage, Sewage Disposal and Refuse Collection, etc., and I am indebted to the Borough Surveyor, Mr. H. V. James, for the following details regarding these matters.

WATER SUPPLY

The water supply to the town proved adequate during the year except during the summer months, when it became necessary as in other years, to augment the supply from the Elan Aqueduct Supply of the Birmingham Corporation. A total of eight million gallons were taken from this source, which is the same amount as in 1950.

No extensions of mains were carried out other than those necessary for the further development of existing housing estates.

As regards purity of supplies, a total of eight samples were submitted for bacteriological examination and all of these proved

satisfactory. The three supplies are all chlorinated before being distributed to the mains. Chemical examinations of both the Burway and Fountain Spring supplies were undertaken in April, 1951, and both samples proved satisfactory. The full results of analyses were given in last year's Report.

It is of importance that samples should be taken of each supply every month, and I have asked the Surveyor to have this done as with a water which is liable to some degree of pollution in its raw state and is chlorinated but not filtered before distribution, it is advisable to have a bacteriological examination made and reported on each month.

More than 90 per cent of the houses in the Borough have a piped supply laid on to the house and in the remainder of the houses a supply is obtained from stand-pipes.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

Out of a total of 1,767 houses in the Borough, 1,715 are connected to the main sewers. No extensions have been made during the year except at existing Housing Estates to assist in their development.

The Council decided to have the main sewer extended along the Sheet Road in order that a few existing houses can be connected to it. This extension will also serve the proposed new Housing Estate.

The Surveyor reports that the Disposal Works are in good condition and that a sample of the effluent taken in April, 1950, was satisfactory. The River Board are shortly going to establish a laboratory where such samples can be examined and it is their intention to take samples from all disposal works in the county.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

Weekly collections are made in the town and disposal is by "tipping." Additional collections are also made from Hotels, Cafes, etc., in the summer months.

SALVAGE

Collection of waste paper was carried on throughout the year. Although the price obtained has gone down, a total of 83 tons was collected and sold for a total of £1,208. A prize presented by the Waste Paper Recovery Association and worth £50 was won for these figures.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

Periodical surveys are made of the Borough and all infestations are dealt with by the local authority.

Special attention is given to the main sewers and to the refuse tip. The area officer of the Ministry of Agriculture has made several visits to the town during the year.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACTS, 1937 AND 1948

Under these Acts the Local Authority have certain duties to undertake, and these duties depend on the type of factory concerned. In factories where power is employed the Local Authority enforces Section 7 of the 1937 Act, other matters being attended to by the Factory Inspector. Where no power is used the Local Authority has to enforce other Sections of the Act dealing with ventilation and matters which might affect the health of the workers.

The Inspector reports that there are a total of 85 factories in the Borough and of these 69 have power installed and 16 have not. A total of 99 inspections were made and four written notices served with regard to defects. In other cases defects were remedied without written notices being served.

Defects found included: (a) Want of cleanliness, 11; (b) defective or insufficient sanitary conveniences, 8.

Section 34 of the Act puts a duty upon district councils to examine certain factories and give a certificate to the occupier if they are satisfied that the means available for escape in the event of fire are satisfactory. It is an offence for any such factory to be used as such without a certificate.

Factories to which this section applies are as follow :

- (a) Those in which 20 persons or more are employed.
- (b) Those in which more than 10 persons are employed above the ground floor in factories constructed after the passing of the Act.
- (c) Those in which more than 10 persons are employed above the first floor or more than 20 feet above ground level in factories built before the passing of the Act.
- (d) Factories in or under which explosives or highly inflammable materials are stored or used.

SECTION D

Housing

Number of inhabited houses	... ..	1,767
Number of houses owned by the Council	...	335
Number of flats controlled by the Council	...	44
Houses completed in 1951 : Council houses	...	21
Private houses	...	4
Total number of applications for houses	...	410
Number of applications for improvement grants		Nil
Number of houses allotted for 1952	...	20
Private licences granted	... ..	4

NEW HOUSES

The 21 houses completed during the year are of the two bed-roomed type and are at the Wheeler Road Site. The remaining seven houses of this type were under construction at the end of 1951. These houses should prove of great value to the Council as they will house old persons or younger persons with small families who are overcrowding some of the three bed-roomed type of houses in the town.

In addition to the above 21 houses, four private houses were built during the year and four were under construction at the end of the year.

HOUSING PROGRAMME

Since the end of the war, 166 permanent houses have been built, with a further 16 under construction. Of these houses 82 have been non-traditional, namely 56 Airey Houses and 26 Hawkesley Aluminium Bungalows. Of the total built 138 have been of the three bedroom type and 28 of the two bedroom type, as are the 16 now under construction. In addition, 32 families have been accommodated in Flats which the Council have made available in various requisitioned properties.

It is planned to erect a further 14 houses on two acres of land on the north and east side of the Dodmore Road Site. The type of house has not yet been decided on.

At Sandpits Road the building of 16 two bed-roomed houses has been commenced in February, 1952. These are of the traditional type. A scheme has also been suggested for the building of 24 houses on this site, the 12 ground floor ones being for old persons and the 12 upper ones to be two bed-roomed maisonettes.

At the Steventon Site there is a projected scheme of building 17 three bed-roomed Hawksley Aluminium Bungalows similar to those at Temeside. It is hoped that a start will be made with these in October, 1952.

The Council plan to acquire a site of nearly 30 acres bounded by Rock Lane, Sheet Road, Dark Lane and the Railway and this should provide a further excellent site for future building. The extension of the sewer along Sheet Road will provide adequate sewerage for this site.

SECTION E

Inspection and Supervision of Food

The inspection of all meat is carried out at the Ministry of Food's slaughterhouse at Craven Arms. This inspection is carried out by the Inspectors of the Ludlow R.D.C.

During the year frequent inspections were made of the shops, cafes, etc., in the town and conditions were found to be generally satisfactory. A number of minor alterations were carried out at several premises without formal notice having to be served.

At the request of the Ministry of Food notices asking dog owners not to bring their dogs into shops where food is sold were issued to shopkeepers and exhibited by them in their shops.

The following amounts of foodstuffs were condemned as being unfit for human consumption and were seized and destroyed :

Milk	...	60 tins	Vegetables	...	115 tins
Meat	...	25 tins	Fish	...	6 tins
Fruit	...	195 tins	Cheese	...	30 lbs.
Meat paste	...	6 jars	Margarine	...	56 lbs.
		Pudding mixtures	...	524 packets	

ICE CREAM

There are 22 retailers of ice cream in the Borough. In all cases but one these retailers sell pre-packed ice cream which is made by one of the larger makers of this commodity and is not handled in the shop concerned. This considerably reduces the risk of any disease being spread by the ice cream. Seven samples of ice cream were taken and of these four were in Grade I, two in Grade II, and one in Grade III.

There is a tendency for persons to apply to be registered as ice cream sellers whose only premises may be a dwelling house where there is no separate room set aside for the purpose of selling it. It would be best for the Council to refuse any such applicants for a licence unless they can satisfy the Inspector that their premises are really suitable and that a room is set aside for this purpose.

MILK

No samples of milk sold in the Borough were taken during the year. The only two dairies in the town which do not belong to producer retailers sell Tuberculin Tested and Pasteurised Milk.

As pointed out in last year's report, the supervision of milk production at farms is now the duty of the Ministry of Agriculture's officers. No action has had to be taken during the year with regard to any milk being the cause of any infectious disease being spread. The control of pasteurising plants is now undertaken by the County Council. At present there is no such plant in the Borough and any milk to be pasteurised has to be sent to Newtown or elsewhere. It would be a good thing if such a plant could be established in the Borough, as it is a centre for a large agricultural community.

SECTION F

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases

The following cases of infectious disease were notified during the year :

NOTIFICATIONS, 1951

Disease				No. Notified	Admitted to Hospital	No. of Deaths
Measles	...	...	...	137	0	0
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	47	0	0
Dysentery	...	...	...	1	0	0
Meningococcal Infection	...	...	...	1	1	1

It will be seen that the Borough has again been remarkably free from any serious outbreak of infectious disease.

Measles was prevalent among the children during the third quarter of the year and Whooping Cough in the first quarter. These diseases usually appear in epidemic form every second year and commence among the school children who bring the infection home to their younger brothers and sisters. It is among these younger infants that both these diseases are most likely to prove fatal through the complication of Broncho-pneumonia. If it is possible therefore to postpone a child getting either Measles or Whooping Cough until it is of school age many lives would be saved.

No cases of Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, or Poliomyelitis were notified. There were no cases of Food Poisoning.

Immunisation of the children against Diphtheria was again carried out by the County Health Staff and by Medical Practitioners both at schools, welfare centres, and at the children's homes. Particulars of the numbers protected will be found in the Annual Report of the County Medical Officer.

TUBERCULOSIS

The total number of cases on the Register at the end of the year was as follows :

MALES		FEMALES		Total
Pulmonary	Non-pulm.	Pulmonary	Non-pulm.	
10	15	24	9	58

The above figures show an increase of one as compared with the number on the Register a year ago.

NEW CASES

Three new cases of pulmonary Tuberculosis and one of the non-pulmonary type were notified, all being women. The ages at notification were 29, 36, 45, and 53 years.

In the previous year there were seven new cases, all of the pulmonary type, one being male and six female.

The prevention of new cases is of great importance and local authorities can help in this work by giving preference in housing lists to families where there is a danger of new cases arising from the presence of an infectious case of tuberculosis in an overcrowded house, *i.e.*, one in which the patient cannot have a bedroom to himself.

DEATHS

Two deaths took place from this disease, both being males and the ages were 75 and 31 years respectively. Both were from Pulmonary Tuberculosis. In 1950 there was one death, and in 1949 six deaths.

DEATH RATE

The death rate per 1,000 of the population was 0.309.

CANCER

There were eight deaths from Cancer (seven male and one female) and the death rate was 1.245 per 1,000 of the population.

A recent trend in the incidence of Cancer has been the great increase in cases of Cancer of the lungs. The cause of this increase is not clear, but it has been stated that cases are much more common among heavy smokers. It is rare for a non-smoker to develop Cancer in the lung.

At the present time we have no figures regarding the incidence of Cancer except those relating to deaths from the disease. Notification of the disease might help to supply information as regards its distribution in the community. We need to know who the people are who suffer, where they live, what their habits are, what they have in common, and what their work is. Enquiries made after a patient's death may not give much information.

CAUSES OF DEATH, 1951

Cause of Death					Number
Diseases of Heart and Circulation					36
Influenza					19
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System					14
Pneumonia and Bronchitis					8
All other causes					22
					—
Total					99
					—

